

## BUDGET GLEANINGS.

I HAVE just been reading a lovely book called *A Solitary Summer*, by the author of *Elizabeth and her German Garden*; it is so prettily written, I think I must tell you her experience in teaching her three little girls Scripture. She was giving them a lesson on Noah and his Ark, and they began asking her too many searching questions, and she had to bring the course to an abrupt ending by assuming that "owl-like air of wisdom peculiar to infallibility in a corner." Don't you sympathize with her?

LENA GREY.

Some of my friends have just started a small circle of the National Home Reading Union. We are taking up two sections of the General Course, Novels, Essays, Poetry, and Italy in the revival of learning. We have a meeting for discussion once a fortnight and we find the N.H.R.U. Magazine most helpful; there are articles and questions and suggestions for discussion on the books read each month. Besides our local members we have four corresponding ones. Miss Monday, Secretary of the N.H.R.U., Surrey House, Victoria Embankment, London, will supply information as to membership, books, etc.

K. S. WOOD.

## SUGGESTIONS.

My pupils usually give two or three entertainments during each term to an audience consisting of their mother and the maids, and the programme is made up of the poetry, music and songs, drill, etc., which they have learnt during the month, so is a very modest one. This month we varied the usual proceedings by having a "Longfellow Evening," and the recitations, songs, and duets, were all from Longfellow's poems, and the children were so much interested in getting it up that I think other children would be interested in doing the same, and we mean to take other writers in the same way.

I can recommend *The Book of Hows*, by Miss Loch (3d.) as containing very plain directions for knitting several very pretty and useful articles. My pupils have made some very

dainty baby's things from it and have not found them at all difficult. The book is illustrated by photographs, and contains directions for more difficult things as well as those suitable for little fingers.

Perhaps everyone knows how to get up a "Fine Art Gallery," but in case some do not they may like to know that a good deal of amusement may be given with little trouble. At a "Coral League" Sale of Work our children were given a small ante-room about 10 ft. by 12. It had books all round the walls and one long shelf, so we hung our "pictures" on the hooks with the title printed on a card above: for example, "The Meet of the Hounds" (a raw mutton-chop), and we placed bulkier pictures on the shelf as "The Flower of the Family" (a flour-bin). We had sixty pictures and charged one penny entrance, and had quite a nice sum to hand over to the Universities' Mission Fund at the end of the afternoon.

K. S. WOOD.

*A Nature Question.*—What plant was it that went by the name of Blue Grass at Ambleside?

*A Note on Writing.*—Would those who teach "A New Handwriting" find cards of graduated difficulty useful? Is it not a difficulty to teach the writing, having the book only, if the form of the letters is new to the teacher?

Several evenings towards the end of August this year a very interesting sight was to be witnessed at Isleworth. There are several osier beds there, the islands in the river being entirely given up to them. Towards sunset thousands and thousands of birds—as far as I could judge, a kind of finch—collected from all parts. They flew round in big circles, sometimes flying so high that they were almost invisible. From time to time companies would separate from the main body and, presumably following the lead of one of their number, would swoop down and disappear amongst the osiers. This continued until every single bird had flown down and all was still. I should be much obliged if any one could tell me whether these myriads of birds were simply collecting for the pleasure of an evening fly, or whether they were thinking that the time had come for journeying to summer climes for the winter?

LILIAN GRAY.